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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
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JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

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Interviewers

Reginald Rose
(signature)

(signature)

(signature)

6-6-74
(date)

Interviewee

James Clark
(signature)

1302 Highland Ave
(address)


Joliet Ill
(city & state)

6-6-74
(date)

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INTERVIEWER: Rey Rossi

INTERVIEWEE: James Clark

ROSSI: This is an interview with James Clark, better known as "Red" or Jim Clark, for the oral history class of Joliet Junior College by Rey Rossi. The interview is taking place at 1302 Highland Avenue on the 17th of April, 1974, at 1 p.m. Alright Jim, perhaps we can start. Were your parents originally from here? Were you born in Joliet?

CLARK: No, my parents came from, father's from New York State and my mother is from oh, out west of here. Practically Joliet, it is west of here. And I was born in Bristol Station. That was over on the other side of Yorkville. I moved to Joliet when I was four years old.

ROSSI: Jim, when were you born?

CLARK: August 21, 1894.

ROSSI: Of course you went to school here and everything.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: What part of town were your parents from?

CLARK: Well, we lived up in this neck of the woods all my life.

ROSSI: Northwest side more or less.

CLARK: Yes, I came here when I was four years, about 1898



when we moved to Joliet.

ROSSI: Primarily, as we discussed before, we will get a little bit of background, although we would like to talk about the police department. And, of course we know that you retired as a captain and we will go on later as to what year and everything. But, were you working before you thought of becoming a policeman? Did you have other jobs?

CLARK: Oh yes, after I came out of the Army; I was in World War I. After I came out of the Army I worked for four years at Ruberoid Company. And I put in a little time at the horseshoe mills and Steel Mill. No permanent job.

ROSSI: Jobs, as I understand, were pretty hard to come by anyhow. How did you ever become part of the police department? Were you interested in that or was it just accidental?

CLARK: Well, there was just no work at the time, and I just made up my mind to look for a permanent job. And that is what I took. I got on the force back in 1924.

ROSSI: As I understand, it was strictly accidental. You were in a tavern or something and talking to some of your buddies.

CLARK: Well, the fella that ran the tavern was an ex-policeman. He had been on the force and off the force. He

is one of the detectives. (Layfield??) When I talked to him about it he said to go on down and see the chief. He will take you on. I didn't know the chief of police from Adam. (Laughter) So, I went down and asked for the chief. This was the desk sergeant I talked to. He asked me what I wanted; I told him and he called the chief out and he said, "You want to see me?" I said, "If you're the chief of police, yes." (Laughter) I told him all about it and he said, "Well go get an application and fill it out and see what you can do." So that's what I did, and I finally was appointed the 22nd of March, 1924.

ROSSI: 1924. How long was it between the time you talked to the chief and you got the job?

CLARK: Not very long. I wasn't very long getting on there. I think it was a month even.

ROSSI: Was there a shortage at that time or were they just expanding the force?

CLARK: Yes, there wasn't too many looking for jobs. It was paying nothing, but it was steady work. That was the only thing.

ROSSI: Do you recall what the salary was when you first started?

CLARK: Well, I think it was around \$130 a month.

ROSSI: A month?

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: And for the \$130 some dollars, how long or how many hours did you work? Days off and so on and so forth.

CLARK: At that time we had to work 8 hours a day. The hours had been shortened. It was 12 hours a day just before that. They had shortened them down to 8 hours a day. And two days off a month. That was pretty long.

ROSSI: That's all you had off then?

CLARK: Yes, and in the meantime if you was lucky to get on days down there, you might get a job working a dance at night, which paid \$5 extra.

ROSSI: Pick up a couple of extra dollars.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: Before we get into the police department, do you remember who the mayor was at that time, Jim?

CLARK: Yes, the mayor was Sehring. George Sehring was mayor at the time I went on.

ROSSI: I see. And at that time did the city have a commission form of government or what?

CLARK: Commission form, yes.

ROSSI: So there was a Commissioner actually, who was really responsible for the police department.

CLARK: Oh yes. Yes. I can't recall who was Police Commissioner at that time.

ROSSI: And from the story that I hear, I understand that the Police Commissioner or Safety Commissioner or whatever he was called, had quite a bit of power.

CLARK: Probably called the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety.

ROSSI: And he was a pretty powerful man in those days.

CLARK: Oh yes. They were boss.

ROSSI: That was it. So we already discussed that you were appointed in March of what year?

CLARK: March 22nd, 1924.

ROSSI: And who was the chief at that time, Jim?

CLARK: Chief Corcoran. James Corcoran.

ROSSI: Had he been around for a while at that time?

CLARK: Oh yes.

ROSSI: Was he an older man? You were still a young man at that time.

CLARK: Oh yes. Yes, he was a good deal older than I was.

ROSSI: And how many men did they have roughly?

CLARK: I was trying to figure that out. About 35 men.



ROSSI: Do you recall what the size of the city was?

CLARK: Well, it was a good deal smaller than it is right now.

ROSSI: Considerably smaller?

CLARK: Oh yes.

ROSSI: How about the city limits when you started?

CLARK: Well, the city limits on the north end here would have been Moran Street. On the west, I don't know, the other side of Raynor Avenue. It wasn't very far on the other side of Raynor Avenue. The city limits on the south end was the old 3-Points—what they called the Sixth Ward down there.

ROSSI: Which would be about just south of McDonough Street.

CLARK: Yes. Down below, just a little bit below, I don't know what it is. Fisk Avenue, it wasn't on Fisk. Duncan Street I think.

ROSSI: Duncan? Approximately where I-80 is now?

CLARK: Yes, yes, just about where 80 is now.

ROSSI: How about on the east?

CLARK: On the east would have been, oh, close over to Henderson Avenue. Maybe it didn't go that far, but out to the creek. I think where the creek goes up through there would

have been the city limits.

ROSSI: Anything else that you remember when you first started? The first day or anything. Do you remember who broke you in?

CLARK: I think Fox Delaney was the sergeant. He was Sergeant Delaney.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: He broke me in. When you first went on you always took an outside beat which included about five different beats and you worked all of them before you got a chance to go downtown to work. You had to learn.

ROSSI: I see. Where were the beats located?

CLARK: Well, you had Collins Street, which was known as Old Whiskey Row at that time. And Cass Street was an outside beat that would start at Michigan Street and run east. That took in everything on Cass Street up Collins Street to Jackson Street back over to Washington Street. Do you know where the calender factory is over there? It took in all them stores over there and then back down Jefferson to Michigan again. That was the big beat.

ROSSI: That was a big one.

CLARK: Then you had what you called the "Hole" that was State and Ohio Streets over near Scott Street up in there.

That was the beat. They used to have one on South Chicago Street. It took in everything on South Chicago Street. Yes, mostly that was all there was on South Chicago Street. There was no other outside streets.

ROSSI: And how about the north end? Was there a beat on the north side or the west side?

CLARK: Well, there used to be one on the west side that took in around Saint Joseph's Hospital, a little bit on North Chicago Street. We used to cross the river and come up to Ruby and Hickory around there. At one time we had a box right down here on Center Street that we had to pull.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: The old patrol boxes, you know, they had on the corners, the old timers.

ROSSI: This is how you checked in.

CLARK: Yes, oh yes. You called in every hour.

ROSSI: Were the boxes in effect when you started?

CLARK: Yes, of course. We didn't have the big old round booth, you know, like they did in the old days. We had the alarm boxes on posts.

ROSSI: I see and you called in once...

CLARK: You called in once every hour.

ROSSI: If you didn't call in would somebody come out looking for you?

CLARK: Yes, the Captain or Sergeant. Downtown you called in every hour, but you also had red lights downtown. There was one located at Joliet and Jefferson Streets and another one located at Cass and Chicago Streets and everybody that worked downtown as patrolman, had to watch them lights. If one of them came on you had to answer that box right away.

ROSSI: That was their means of getting in touch with you?

CLARK: Yes, that's the only means they had to get in touch with you outside of on the hour.

ROSSI: And of course we are talking about 1924 and we are talking about foot patrol at that time.

CLARK: Oh yes, that was all foot patrol.

ROSSI: I don't imagine that there were any cars at all, were there?

CLARK: No, there were no cars at all for patrol.

ROSSI: When you started?

CLARK: No, we had one open air Ford. I think it was used for a station car, just to make a call at night. I think they only had one car when I went to work there, outside their ambulance and their patrol wagons.

ROSSI: Were the shifts split up pretty much between the

thirty men?

CLARK: Oh yes. You had four men working. Well, when I first started working there were only two men working days, two patrolmen covered the streets. But after they came in with this hour parking on cars and marking cars, there was four men working downtown, and there was four beats.

ROSSI: About what year was that, Jim? Roughly.

CLARK: Well, it had to come in the early '30's.

ROSSI: The early '30's, yes.

CLARK: Yes, and every shift was composed of four beats or four men on a shift, four beats downtown, see. There would be four men on a shift, then your outside beats. You wouldn't have all of the outside beats covered. Then all of a sudden, Whiskey Row, there would be one or two men up there. Like one would go to work at three o'clock in the afternoon, and he would work till eleven at night, then on the second shift there would be one man that would go up there at seven o'clock at night and work till four in the morning. So that would leave two men up there practically together all night. That was a rough beat.

ROSSI: That's what I understand. That is what I was going to bring up...that Collins Street was a pretty rough beat.

CLARK: That was a rough beat.

ROSSI: That was the worst patrol you could draw, wasn't it?

CLARK: Well, yes. A lot of fellas called it the worst, I don't. I always liked it up there. (Laughter) It all depended on how you were getting along with people. That was the thing of it.

ROSSI: And what did you actually have to do physically, when you walked that beat?

CLARK: Well, we walked there from...take the seven at night shift...you went up there at seven o'clock and you pulled a box at Elwood and Collins Street. When you first went out there you pulled that box at seven o'clock. And the next hour you would go to Henderson and Meeker Avenue which is out near the "J" yards. That was box 64 up there and we used to pull it at eight o'clock. Nine o'clock they had a box at Meeker and Collins Street. You pulled that down there, then went back down to Elwood Street. You just kept alternating up to four o'clock in the morning. Back and forth.

ROSSI: After the businesses closed did you have to actually, physically, check them or shake the doors?

CLARK: Yes, we tried every door, front and back, all the time. You had to do it. If you found a store open at night, broken into, you had to go in and search that place yourself. You didn't have any way of calling the station.

You had to go in and search the place, and then if they had a telephone you would call the station and tell them about it. That's the way you worked that.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: That took four men practically, up there on two shifts. You would have one going up at three o'clock.

ROSSI: Four men per day.

CLARK: Yes, and at one time I guess, they had a fifth man who worked from seven in the morning till three in the afternoon up there, too.

ROSSI: This was during prohibition days, or was it after?

CLARK: This was during prohibition days, yes.

ROSSI: And probably, in a few places up there, you could get a drink, too.

CLARK: All night long. (Laughter) That's one thing... they never went dry.

ROSSI: Even though it was not legally saleable, you could still find it?

CLARK: Oh yes, well, I guess everybody expected it in those days.

ROSSI: Right.

CLARK: There was no law no more.

ROSSI: Right. Were they mostly making their own moonshine at that time, or were they buying?

CLARK: A good share of them was making their own. Up in there, it was a mixed nationality. You know, a little bit of everything up in there. And they always, if you knew where to go...most any house you went along, you could stop and have a drink.

ROSSI: But taverns as such; there weren't any when you started.

CLARK: Oh yes, there were blind pigs or whatever you call them. There were taverns there where I guess they did pay a license of some kind. I don't know what it cost them. It was all supposed to be soft drinks.

ROSSI: It was supposed to be soft drinks?

CLARK: Yes, oh yes. There were quite a few of them up there.

ROSSI: So they weren't actually taverns as we know them today.

CLARK: Oh no, no. Between them and the private homes, you never went dry.

ROSSI: I'll bet! (Laughter) How many men worked in the station when you started, Jim?

CLARK: Well, when I went in, there was a station crew, what you called a station man, a driver and a guy followed a wagon. You know, you had to make calls outside, you had to be two on the wagon or even on the ambulance calls. And that was practically about all that worked inside. Of course, your motorcycle men. You had motorcycle men in those days who were in and out.

ROSSI: At the time, when you started, there were motorcycle men?

CLARK: Oh yes.

ROSSI: I see. How many motorcycles did they have?

CLARK: I don't think they had over two motorcycles at that time. Of course, you had Glen Frekleton and Maurice Herbert riding when I was there. Mike Cassidy, and I don't know who was the fourth rider. Took turns you see, from seven in the morning till eleven at night; so you would have the two turns.

ROSSI: Did you ever ride the motorcycle?

CLARK: No, they couldn't give me one. (Laughter)

ROSSI: Never did. I don't blame you.

CLARK: No, I went in the station as a relief man after I was there for a while. I worked as relief, relieving the other fellows on different beats. I was shot down there

in 1928. I was relieving Al Schomig, he was the driver at that time and happened to be off, and I was taking his place. We got a call about 3:30 in the afternoon and went out on the call. The city was putting in a sewer down on Water Street. That was all solid rock and they had to blast down there; so they had these holes along there and they boarded them up. They put a high board fence in to keep the rocks from flying. One of the fellows working in the ditch, see, got to kidding and the colored fellow down there one day, I guess, the colored fellow was half steamed up. He went home and got a shot gun and chased them all out of the ditch. So we got a call on it to go down. We searched his house and couldn't find him. I was with Sergeant Boe, (he was the sergeant at that time) and Ab Kavanaugh. (He was a patrolman) And we couldn't find him in his own house, so they were looking around and I came out. There was an alley running by his place, and I was looking around when some guy hollered, "There he runs, up the alley." So I took after him. I chased him up onto Desplaines Street and he ran from me into another house. I wasn't a half a minute behind him, but I don't know how he got in the house so quick. He got a hold of his shot gun just as I opened the door. He let go and got me in the neck and in the shoulder with the shotgun. Good thing he was close to me. The shot hadn't got a chance to spread yet, and it just took the whole shoulder right out of my coat.

ROSSI: The pattern was still small.

CLARK: Yes, it just took the whole shoulder. Of course, I wore heavy coats in those days, too. And the gun he had was loaded with bird shot and wasn't a large pellet, so it didn't penetrate too much. It did take a lot out of the coat and stuff, anyway, in the neck here.

ROSSI: You were fortunate then. How long were you laid up?

CLARK: I was only laid up for about a week; in the hospital for a week. Maybe two or three weeks before I went back to work. I was in the hospital for a week.

ROSSI: And, of course he was apprehended, I suppose, and convicted?

CLARK: Oh yes. Ab Kavanaugh heard the shot; he was still over at Water Street when he heard the shot. He came running over there and went in the house and got the guy. I had backed down off the porch and got myself a car to go up to the hospital. One of the neighbors there gave me a ride up.

ROSSI: You had to depend on people alot at that time to give you a hand, didn't you?

CLARK: Of course, sure.

ROSSI: A little different than today.

CLARK: Oh quite. Today they'd take another shot at you.

ROSSI: What was he subsequently charged with? Attempted murder?

CLARK: No, that's what we thought he would be, but he was charged with assault with a deadly weapon. And they couldn't even prove "intent." They say, in those days, you couldn't prove what a man's intentions were. Well, I don't think you can yet today.

ROSSI: No.

CLARK: So, he was given eleven months in the county jail.

ROSSI: That was it?

CLARK: When he got out they put him right on a train. He left Joliet.

ROSSI: Sentences weren't too severe at that time then, were they? Do you recall who the State's Attorney was at that time?

CLARK: Let's see. I think Hjalmer Rehn. I think Rehn was State's Attorney at that time.

ROSSI: What was his name?

CLARK: Hjalmer Rehn. I think he was the State's Attorney at that time, and Bill McCabe defended this colored fellow.

ROSSI: I see. That was before Bill got involved with the Spectator.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: Was he State's Attorney at one time also? Bill McCabe?

CLARK: Bill McCabe, I think he was at one time. Seems to me like he was.

ROSSI: That was before or after you were on the police department, do you recall?

CLARK: I don't recall now, whether Bill was State's Attorney after I went on. It must have been after I went on the department.

ROSSI: After you went on, one thing we overlooked before, and I would imagine it was where I remember it, but where was the police station when you started?

CLARK: On Joliet Street. The old.

ROSSI: Was it still Joliet Street?

CLARK: The old one.

ROSSI: Had it been there for some time, or was it relatively new at that time?

CLARK: Oh no, it had been there for quite a while. I forget the date it was built. It's just printed right on

the front of the building. Yes, it was the same old police station. It was pretty old then.

ROSSI: After you finally got off the beat and reliefs and everything else, what was your next job?

CLARK: Well, I went to plainclothesman after I was shot. I come back. After I went back to work I went in as a plainclothesman.

ROSSI: That was after you were on only about four or five years, too.

CLARK: Yes, yes.

ROSSI: Was that more or less a promotion?

CLARK: Well, it was not in pay, no.

ROSSI: Not in pay?

CLARK: Not in pay, but it was working in plainclothes all the time. It was really different work; most of them days your work was from seven at night till four in the morning. We had shifts for plainclothesmen, too.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: We used to start out at the police station at seven o'clock at night, two of us, and we'd make the rounds of all the taverns to see who was hanging around. There was still prohibition at that time. We used to make the rounds of

all the taverns clear up through the "hole" to Meeker Avenue. We'd come back into the station at eleven o'clock at night for an hour, for supper hour, and we'd work till four in the morning just prowling the streets.

ROSSI: And I used to hear all the time you checked the taverns quite regularly.

CLARK: Oh yes.

ROSSI: I always remember B.T. McGann always saying that you won't find a murderer in church. You'll find them in a tavern someplace.

CLARK: Bernie should know.

ROSSI: Yes.

CLARK: Yes, well I remember an officer Weiss was shot, Sergeant Weiss. It wasn't a week after I started on the force. That was in 1924 about the last of March. He was shot by a colored fellow right downtown, Scott and Jefferson Streets. And, of course, I'm working the outside beat. A new man you know, don't know what it is all about. They give me a description of a colored fellow over the box when I called in, you know what that meant to me. But he was picked up the nex night I think it was. They picked him up around State and Eastern Avenues, up in there. We used to call it the "hole." In the old days they used to call it a "hole" up in there.

ROSSI: Is Weiss one of them that got killed in the line of duty?

CLARK: Oh yes, yes. He was killed in the line of duty.

ROSSI: He was killed at that time?

CLARK: Yes. Sergeant Weiss. Then we had, later on, an Officer Murphy killed. He was off duty, but waiting around the station on a Sunday morning to go to church. While he was waiting to go to church, a call came in that the Oliver Hotel, over on Richards Street, had just been held up. So Officer Murphy went along with the crew that went over there. I wasn't on that call. But he just walked into the hotel and started looking around and the manager shot him.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: The fellows were gone, that done the holdup. The manager was up on the balcony and he'd seen Murphy 'cause Murphy was in plain clothes. He came in there and bang, caught him right between the eyes. Killed him dead as a doornail, and he was just waiting to go to church that morning.

ROSSI: Do you remember anything else in particular that stands out while you were walking the beats and as a detective? Any big names or Chicago boys?

CLARK: Well, I remember arresting Al Capone here.

ROSSI: Al Capone. I heard about that. How did that come about?

CLARK: Well, I don't know. Well, Fornango was chief then. He had received a call from the Chicago police that Capone was going to get off the train here in Joliet. So we met the train at the Union Depot. Al Capone and about six of his lieutenants or whatever they are, got off the train and we picked them all up. Everyone had a .45 on them. So we took them over and locked them up. I suppose they were cited for carrying guns here, but that was about all that happened here to them.

ROSSI: Were they wanted, at that time, in Chicago?

CLARK: No, no, but the Chicago police kept an eye on that fellow all the time. I don't know why. I guess he caused a lot of trouble.

ROSSI: Was he finally released then or was he turned over to Chicago or what?

CLARK: No, he was released and they went on their way again. But the Chicago police knew where he was, I guess, practically all the time, when he was coming or going or anything else. But it was just a routine pickup here when they got off the train.

ROSSI: It would be a little different today. Today you couldn't even ask them anything unless you remind him of

his rights.

CLARK: You just went over and picked them up. And you knew them all. You could tell the description of them guys when they got off the train; and everybody knew Capone. His picture was in the paper every other day or so.

ROSSI: What else do you remember outstanding, when you were a detective, Jim? Any big holdups or shootings or anything that you were able to solve; any real good case?

CLARK: Well, when I was in plain clothes, I was trying to think of something. I don't know if I wrote something down or not....Well, when I was in plain clothes I don't know. There was so darned much going on that it's hard to remember. I don't think it involved any....We did have another shooting there. That is, Ab Kavanaugh was shot. Him, I think it was Sergeant McCanna. McCanna was a sergeant at that time. That was during prohibition days, too. We had some garage on Van Buren Street. I don't know the name of the garage now, but we got a report that someone had broken in there and was trying to get away with a car. I guess Kavanaugh and Sergeant McCanna went over there, and the sergeant left the patrolman out at the front door and he went around the back with the car. And the guys came out the front door and they shot Kavanaugh as they came out. They shot him with a .45 right through the shoulder. And he layed there quite a while before McCanna came back

around there and found him. His coat was on fire. That's how close they were to shoot him. He recovered but never did come back to work. He took his pension then, he never did come back.

ROSSI: I see. Were they apprehended eventually?

CLARK: They were apprehended (they practically knew who they were) in Milwaukee, robbing a bank.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: Oh, we had some wicked customers. These fellows mostly hung around a tavern called "The Labor Temple," over on Jefferson Street. You probably know where "The Labor Temple" was over there. Well, there used to be a tavern down in the basement then, but it wasn't run by the labor. This was run by somebody else. That's where this gang was hanging around in there all the time. They were a wicked bunch. They were all Chicago guys.

ROSSI: They used to come down here quite frequently?

CLARK: Oh yes. They met at a hangout over there. Later on during prohibition, we got so that we used to go in and shake down them joints. Walk in with sawed-off shot guns and line them up against the wall and shake them down, looking for guns and stuff like that. Then we had Fox Delaney shot....It was up on Jefferson Street, a little laundry just west of the De LaSalle School there. Somebody

had broken in there one night in the front door, and the guy slept in the back end. The guy called the station, I guess and turned around and he went back to bed. So Fox Delaney went up there, he was sergeant then and Fox crawled through a hole in the door and was looking around and the guy came out from the back and shot Fox. They weren't waiting for the police to come up or anything, just went back to bed. And Fox got shot just about the same as I was. That was in the winter time.

ROSSI: That was the same thing again, shot by the owner of the shop.

CLARK: Yes, by the owner of the shop. Fox was laid up for a while, but later came back to work. He wasn't hurt too bad, but just like shots you know, going through your clothes and hitting you.

ROSSI: Jim, we are talking about '24 you came on and '28 you went as a detective. How long were you a detective working plainclothes, till you got promoted to sergeant or were you back in uniform before that?

CLARK: No, I went back in uniform when I went to work in the station driving the wagon. I was a driver in the station.

ROSSI: And the wagon at that time was what?

CLARK: The wagon was a real old patrol wagon. And we had

an old Dodge for an ambulance. The old system with the big brass bell on the front, you pulled a rope to ring it.

ROSSI: And you had two cars then. You had a patty-wagon and the ambulance.

CLARK: Well, about that time when I went in driving, we began to get a couple of more cars, for service cars. I think the only squad car they had at that time was the Chief's Buick. We used to use that at night for a squad car.

ROSSI: This would be around the early '30's that they first started having cars? And still it was just the one available? Just the Chief's car for any patrol or anything.

CLARK: No, we had a flivver Ford touring car for service calls, you know, out of station. But for a squad car, they used the Chief's big Buick.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: Yea, at night. You had to have four or five men, and that was a touring car too.

ROSSI: I know we talked one time about communications.

CLARK: Well, when we got the radio and we got cars to use as squad cars, which were old Chevys or Fords or something like that, our communication was brought in through the old

Boston Store. The broadcasting station over there.

ROSSI: Did they have a regular radio station there?

CLARK: They had a regular radio station there. And we had a regular radio in the car that was tuned into this station all the time, so that was nice that they listened to music. And when they wanted us, they used to ring a big bell to attract our attention. We would have to go someplace to call into the station to see what they wanted.

ROSSI: Whatever they wanted.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: So, in other words all the cars heard the bell and they all called in.

CLARK: Yes. You didn't know who it was for.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: Just call into the station and find out what is going on.

ROSSI: Then were you promoted to sergeant when you were working inside yet or...

CLARK: Yes, I think so. It was on the...I thought I had it marked down here. Yes, I was in the station. I was appointed a sergeant on May 31, 1937.

ROSSI: Then what were you in charge of as a sergeant?

CLARK: Well, then you would have your regular detail, whoever was working that turn was under you. You and the Captain. The Captain was in charge and then you worked under the Captain. Your duty was to go out and check the men and find out if they were on the job and doing their work.

ROSSI: In other words you had everything then. You had the station men under you, the beat men under you, and detectives.

CLARK: Everything. The sergeant used to go out on the streets. He never killed too much time in the station. He was out on the street mostly, unless they wanted him. When he pulled the box they'd tell him to come in if they had some special detail or something to do.

ROSSI: Could you more or less locate as you wanted to? You were free to check all the spots.

CLARK: Yes. You see at night, especially on the eleven to seven details, then you would walk and meet these outside fellows on the outside beats. You didn't have a car to go with you, you walked. You would meet them that way.

ROSSI: And you would have to check all the beats.

CLARK: You were supposed to check them all. Go around at least once a night to see how the men were making out, that

was the main thing.

ROSSI: That entailed a little bit of walking, trying to cover all four beats.

CLARK: Oh, yes. It covered a lot. Of course you knew what box he had to pull and you knew just where to meet him.

ROSSI: At what time.

CLARK: Yes, but downtown then, you were right with the men all the time because you more or less traveled the beat as much as they did. Probably, you traveled it more than they did.

ROSSI: And as sergeant were you always in uniform? There was not a plainclothes sergeant too?

CLARK: No, the sergeant was in uniform all the time.

ROSSI: Of course there were no other promotions, were there? From Sergeant to Captain. Were there Lieutenants at that time or not?

CLARK: No, no Lieutenants at that time.

ROSSI: You went from Sergeant to Captain.

CLARK: One thing we did miss out on. I was going to say, when I first went to work there was our identification system. In them days they had what they called the Bertillion

system, which consisted of measurements, and the only fellow there that ever knew anything about that I guess, was Lieutenant Matt Connors. He was a Lieutenant. That was the only Lieutenant on the police force. And he took care of all that work, nobody else knew anything about it, I guess.

ROSSI: I understand they measured all the features. They measured the ears, the nose and everything else. That was before fingerprints came in.

CLARK: Oh, yes, that's before fingerprints came in. And he was the only fellow there that knew anything about that. Fingerprints didn't come in until, oh a few years later when, I think Mike Cassidy was about the first fellow down there that took up fingerprinting. He was pretty good. Then they got to sending fellows to Washington to school, to FBI School. Maurice Hebert went to the FBI and John Dillon went to the FBI. Belfield went to the FBI, and I don't know who else. From that time on the identification simple, you know.

ROSSI: Did they use the same pictures of them too? They used to mug them in those days?

CLARK: Oh, yes. Matt had one of them cameras that flashed. You'd wipe the powder and take pictures. Yea, they took pictures of them then.

ROSSI: And they probably used...



CLARK: But nothing like they do today.

ROSSI: Probably just the most important ones, or the ones that you thought would come back again.

CLARK: Yes, definitely.

ROSSI: Was there an identification bureau at that time or was that part of the plainclothesmen?

CLARK: Well, that was just Matt Connors, Lieutenant Connor's work. He kept that to himself, I guess. Maybe the Chief or somebody like that knew something about it, but us fellows, we knew nothing about it.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: It would do us no good to look at it, you wouldn't know nothing about it.

ROSSI: Then you were talking about them going to school, Jim. What was the extent of your training when you went on? Was it strictly being with somebody?

CLARK: Oh, yes. When you started out down there they sent a sergeant out with you to show you the beat. He was supposed to show you the beat. Well, the biggest part of them, they showed you the call boxes, where you were supposed to call in every hour. That was darn near the extent of their showing you around. They told you where the boundary lines were, where you were supposed to go, and from then on, you found out yourself.

ROSSI: Was that the extent of the training or did they have some firearms training or anything? Nothing at all?

CLARK: No, not until later years, then they began to do a lot of practice work down in the basement down there, shooting.

ROSSI: How about going back a little bit. How about the uniforms and weapons at that time. Were those furnished or did you have to buy them yourself?

CLARK: No, you bought everything.

ROSSI: You buy everything.

CLARK: Yes. When I went on I didn't have ten cents. I had to start out buying a gun, full uniform, raincoat, everything.

ROSSI: What did you have to have? One uniform at that time?

CLARK: One was plenty. They cost pretty good money.

ROSSI: Things have changed considerably now. They give you all your uniforms, your weapons, and hospitalization. How about retirement? Was the retirement plan in effect at the time you started?

CLARK: Yes, that was in effect. Them days you thought, well gee, when we got up to making \$200 a month, you know, it was easy to retire at \$100 a month.

ROSSI: It looked like big money at that time.

CLARK: It looked like big money.

ROSSI: And when were you promoted to Captain, Jim?

CLARK: Oh, I took the examination and was appointed Captain October 1, 1943.

ROSSI: Let me ask you about that, about the promotions.
How were they, by examination at that time?

CLARK: Yes, yes.

ROSSI: Always were?

CLARK: Yes, there was always an examination, but I don't know who...There were two or three more that took the examination. I don't know just who they were now. I know Bill Kwasnieski was one. Who the others were, I don't know. At that time that was under Mayor Jones.

ROSSI: I see. Who was the Chief at that time?

CLARK: Overby was the Chief then.

ROSSI: He was. He replaced Fornango.

CLARK: Fornango, yes.

ROSSI: Do you remember the, what was the time period that Fornango was Chief?

CLARK: I don't know. He was a Captain when I went to work

down there.

ROSSI: Fornango was?

CLARK: Yes, so Jim Corcoran retired and Fornango took his place. Well, I think it must of been sometime early in 1940 that Overby went in there.

ROSSI: Overby was in for only a couple of years, wasn't he, as Chief?

CLARK: Yes. He didn't stay there very long. It was when he went in under Jones, I know. When Jones left there, Jimmy Hennessey, no Janke, Art Janke came in. No, I can tell you now Overby didn't take the Chief's job until Art Janke came in. He came in there under Janke. So that would be what, 1944 I think.

ROSSI: After Overby?

CLARK: Then Ervin Boe took over.

ROSSI: Boe was apparently Chief after you retired, wasn't he?

CLARK: Yes, yes. He was Chief when I retired.

ROSSI: Boe was a sergeant when you came on the department, or was he?

CLARK: No, he was a patrolman.

ROSSI: A patrolman.

CLARK: Yes, he was made a sergeant a short time after I came on. Then he worked up to Captain and then to Chief.

ROSSI: Do you remember roughly what year you started getting cars and radios and things like that?

CLARK: Well, no I don't remember it exactly, but it had to be in the early '30's.

ROSSI: The early '30's.

CLARK: When we began to get equipped half-way so you knew what you was doing, yes.

ROSSI: Do you remember salary-wise when you were a sergeant, roughly? It wasn't too much more than a patrolman, from what I understand.

CLARK: No, it wasn't. No, I don't know just exactly what the salary was, but it wasn't much difference in it.

ROSSI: How about as Captain? Was that a pretty good raise or...

CLARK: No. Captain, when I left there, only paid \$300 a month.

ROSSI: And you retired as a Captain.

CLARK: When I retired as a Captain, yes. That was after twenty-four and one-half years of service.

ROSSI: And what year was that when you retired, Jim?

CLARK: 1948. Yes. Well, the last part of '48. I worked the last day of November.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: Then I retired.

ROSSI: That's a far cry again, from what it is today. That's about thirty-six hundred dollars a year.

CLARK: Oh gee, yes.

ROSSI: Now Captain's wages is roughly about seventeen or eighteen thousand.

CLARK: Yes. Oh, we were making nothing. We wasn't making nothing. Then we had, at one time during the early depression there, I think our salary was cut down to about \$115 a month. That is patrolman's. And the city had no money, and they couldn't pay you. You would get paid if you was lucky; you could go up to City Hall and chisel a tax warrant, then find somebody to buy it off you at a discount, all on a discount of ten per cent. Then the script. Then they came out with script. Did you ever see that script?

ROSSI: No, but I remember hearing about it.

CLARK: I'll show you one if you want to see it.

ROSSI: Alright. Then tell me about it too.

CLARK: Maybe I'll give it to you and let you....There's the script.

ROSSI: There's the script. It reads, "Hold to light and see watermark and we will pay the bearer onedollar in accordance with the terms set out on the certificate printed on the back." They actually paid you with a number of these or what?

CLARK: Oh, yes. They were made up in ten dollar bills, I guess, twenty dollar bills.

ROSSI: And you got a whole sack of them.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: And did you have to sell these at discount too, or were they worth.

CLARK: At the groceries, they wouldn't take them. The stores wouldn't take them. Where were they going to cash them in to pay their bills?

ROSSI: And they would have to hold them for so long when the city got money.

CLARK: Yes, if you wanted to keep them that long, but most of the guys would discount them.

ROSSI: How long were they paying you in script?

CLARK: I don't know just how long that did run. It didn't run too long. I think probably the following year, see that was put out in '33.

ROSSI: That's interesting. It's kind of hard to believe these days, the way things were at that time.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: Yes, I'd like to copy this and make it part of the interview. Just take a picture of it.

CLARK: Can you do that?

ROSSI: Yes, I'll just take a picture of it and bring it back and we'll put it in a little booklet. We'll put it right in here.

CLARK: That's the only one I kept.

ROSSI: I'll copy it and get it right back to you if it's alright with you.

CLARK: Yes, sure.

ROSSI: It won't hurt it at all. It won't damage it. I'll even make a picture of the drunk here. This was taken at the station?

CLARK: Yes, Maurice Hebert took that. He's always carrying a bulb around. He got a picture of the drunk that was arrested.

ROSSI: Was he a regular?

CLARK: A regular. Two or three times a day.

ROSSI: No kidding!

CLARK: Yes, Shearin we used to call him. Joe Shearin was his name. I was telling Maurice yesterday about it, said, "Gee, I still got that picture you took of "Faggety Shearin." That was a good picture of him, a beautiful picture.

ROSSI: Anything else you remember? Things that happened and where. Talking about promotions, were they hard to come by at that time?

CLARK: Yes. It was more or less politics. You know when I was made a sergeant I didn't have a ghost of a chance of getting to be a sergeant. I knew it. When I took the exam I said, "I'm going to take every examination that comes along." So, I took it. There was four of us took it. I think there was three of them ahead of me. And I don't think....It was after Louie Talkie's death. Louie was a sergeant down there, and he died at home and I think after his death we took the examination. And I don't know who they all were right now. Joe Smith I know took it. Two others and myself, I don't know who else. It seemed to me like I was the fourth one. Anyhow, something happened to the first two. One of them was made a sergeant. And the second one, what happened to him? And when the third one came up for sergeant, a person who I would rather not name was in line for it. And Jones was Mayor at that time and this party who was to be made sergeant was a guy that never wanted to be a policeman. He wanted to be the big shot all the time, plainclothes and do nothing. He wouldn't wear a uniform. So, he come to me, I was next on the list see,

after him, he wanted me to draw the pay for the job, but let him get the title for it.

ROSSI: I'll be darned.

CLARK: And I said, "Things don't work out that way." He said, "I would like to have the title." (Because it made him in line for the Captain's job, see. Next in line.) So I went up to see Mayor Jones. And I told Jones about it, and Jones told me, he said, "He will either take the job or go without it." And that's what happened. He wouldn't take the job because they had to wear uniforms.

ROSSI: And he would have to go out in the street and do some work.

CLARK: Yes. He'd have to be a policeman. So then they give it to me. From there on I went along good. But that was the only difficulty I ever had on making promotion. Under Janke I went through that. It was only Bill Kwasnieski and I and I don't know who else, took it for the Captain's job. And I passed. I got letters in there now if you want to see them.

ROSSI: You still have the letters and everything from when you were appointed?

CLARK: If you want to see them.

ROSSI: Alright, go ahead. We'll take a look at them.

CLARK: Yes, I....Here it is. (Laughter)

ROSSI: April 28, 1936, your name is Clark. Dear Sir: You are hereby advised in a promotional examination for patrol sergeant held April 6, 1936, you were placed fourth out of a grade of 77. Your name was placed on the eligibility list. This was Richard A. Jones.

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: This brings up an interesting fact here. They had police and fire commissioners at that time also?

CLARK: Yes, sure.

ROSSI: Did they when you came on the department, or did that come on later?

CLARK: No, I think they had that.

ROSSI: And just for the records there, I see that the Commissioners were John P. Eib. E-I-B. Eib was chairman, Arthur G. Momper, M-O-M-P-E-R, and James E. Corcoran. And Richard Jones was the secretary and Dr. Arthur Fahrner was the medical examiner.

CLARK: Right. See, at that time Corcoran, he was Chief when I went on, but when I was made sergeant he had retired.

ROSSI: This one is dated April 28th. before the Fire and Police Commissioner in the City of Joliet, April 28, 1937. Officer James Clark: You are notified that the Board has appointed you to fill the office of the patrol sergeant is now vacant. You will report to Chief of Police and Commis-

sioner of Public Health and Safety for duty as of May 1, 1937. Then December, of course, 1937, you received your letter that the probationary period has expired and on recommendation of Chief N.J. Fornango your appointment had been made permanent. Then the next one, as I imagine, is a notification where; Sergeant James E. Clark, dated September 28, 1943, and Dear Sir and so on. You placed first in the examination held September 23, 1943 for Captain of Joliet Police Department. Your appointment as Captain will be effective as of October 1, 1943, by the Secretary of the Police and Fire Commission, Victor E. Mortvedt. M-O-R-T-V-E-D-T. He was the Secretary. I see now the Commissioners of, now this just has that Arthur L. Janke was Mayor, and Harry Truax was the Chairman of the Police and Fire Board and Lester Kane, Howard Schluntz, and Dr. Frank Schmelik was medical examiner. What have you got there? This apparently was when you were...that's your leave of absence. This dates back to April 3, 1945. Captain James Clark, you are hereby commended by the Board for alertness, efficiency, apprehending Andrew Rada, whom you arrested in Union Station after he burglarized Reisburg Jewelry Store, March 25, 1945. It is this kind of work that makes a good police department. Keep up the good work. Signed by Vic Mortvedt, who was the Secretary of the Police Department. And this is dated April 15, 1944 and states your probationary period as Captain of the Joliet Police Department was completed as of April 1, 1944, on

recommendation of Chief of Police, Ernest Overby, we are pleased to make your appointment permanent as of April 1, 1944. Jim, we are going to take a break and turn the tape around. Jim, I went through your promotions and talked about the Chiefs of the past and during your time, were they rough to work for or were they pretty easy to get along with? Most of them work their way up to their ranks or what?

CLARK: Yes, most of them, but most came through the ranks. The first Chief was Corcoran and he was, well, I didn't work too long under him. Then Fornango came on. Fornango was a good boss. Then Overby came on and Overby was one of the nicest Chiefs, I thought, that I ever worked for. He was more reasonable than, well, Fornango was a reasonable man, too. I remember one incident on the streets about 5 o'clock in the morning in the wintertime, colder than Billie get out, and I'm standing on the corner talking with Louie Talkie and Joe Hebert, who were plainclothesmen at that time. And Dave Emery at one time was City Commissioner here, and he was a watchman at the bank when they built the Union Bank. Yea, the Union Bank when they were rebuilding it. I'm standing there, they had just put in new fire boxes and I hadn't paid any attention to them. And there was no glass left in there, just a little trigger, and I said to Hebert or Talkie, I said, "What do you do to call in the alarm here? Just pull the trigger and open the box?" And I guess one of them said, "I guess

that's all there is." Well, I pulled the trigger. And that box started click, click, click, and I said, "So long, I'm leaving." Dave Emery, he was a pretty nice sort of a guy, he said, "Oh, never mind," he said, "It's alright, don't worry about that." So Talkie and Hebert took a walk and I stayed there until the fire department came down and the guy jumped off the truck and he said, "Where's the fire?" And I said, "I'll be damned if I know." He said, "Who pulled that box?" I said, "I did." And he said, "What for?" And I said, "I wanted to see how it worked."
(Laughter)

ROSSI: I bet they didn't appreciate that.

CLARK: No. So Fornango was Chief and he happened to be out walking on the streets at the time. No, he was Captain. He happened to be walking on the street and I met him a little later and like I knew him, he was laughing when he came up to me and I said, "Gee, I guess I pulled a boner up here." And he said, "No, it's time for the fellows to get out of bed." So, it was marked in the Fire Department up there, "Box pulled by mistake by Officer Clark." But they were good natured about things like that.

ROSSI: And how about Boe?

CLARK: Boe was more of a strict captain.

ROSSI: He was stricter?

CLARK: Yes, he was a lot stricter than any of them.

ROSSI: That's the Chief also?

CLARK: Yes.

ROSSI: Of course, by that time you started getting more men, didn't you? How many men did you have there when you were about ready to retire?

CLARK: I think we had forty, close to fifty men there then.

ROSSI: Well, that's not too many more actually, in that period of time.

CLARK: Not too many more. They hadn't enlarged the force very much up to then.

ROSSI: Were you, at that time, beginning to get radios and a couple of cars?

CLARK: Yes. We only had two squad cars running over night.

ROSSI: Oh, I see.

CLARK: Yes, that's all. Two men to a car.

ROSSI: Big difference from the 30's.

CLARK: They had taken some of the outside beats too then, when they got the squad cars going.

ROSSI: Now there is about thirty-five units all total, so that again...

CLARK: I wouldn't know what they got anymore, what they

got down there.

ROSSI: About thirty-five of them. Plus a couple of three-wheelers and a couple of wagons, you know. Evidence units and a little bit of everything.

CLARK: Sometimes I wonder what they do with all of it. I have never seen one. (Laughter)

ROSSI: Probably used to get more coverage, at that time, with fewer men. And, the one thing I wanted to ask you about was evidence, of course. That is what I am interested in. Did you have to keep things, at that time, as evidence or did you more or less give them back to the party and just prosecute them on your say so?

CLARK: Oh no. Things that were kept there were evidence. That was up to the men in the identification bureau, like Sergeant Hebert and Dillon, I guess he was up in there too.

ROSSI: Whenever you recover stolen money or something like that, you had to hold it until trial time?

CLARK: Oh yes, sure.

ROSSI: Same as today. And how about, were they pretty rough on the chain in court or weren't they too bad? About maintaining a chain on that evidence.

CLARK: You mean....

ROSSI: As far as who handled it, whose possession it had

been in.

CLARK: Yes, I guess it was all in the hands of...of course, if there was money that was kept in a safe in the Captain's office, or the Chief's office. It would be the Captain's office in the old days. Other evidence was kept by the Identification Bureau. They kept all that stuff up there.

ROSSI: And I even remember about the Captains at that time. I think Captains commanded a lot of respect from his men, because I can remember if his door was shut, you knocked on it. You didn't walk in there until somebody told you to come in.

CLARK: Oh no, no, no. You paid a little respect then.

ROSSI: To the rank Sergeant, was the Sergeant respected like that too?

CLARK: Well, he was out with the men all the time. Even when you come to work maybe fifteen, twenty minutes early, we used to have to report at least fifteen minutes early before your shift started, then they used to hold inspection. You come to work and you had to be dressed neat, clean, and look like a policeman. Today, I don't think it makes any difference how you come to work.

ROSSI: Was inspection made daily then?

CLARK: Every shift. The Captain had to come out and inspect us; he called you at roll call. Everybody had to

be there at that time.

ROSSI: And did they give you your specific assignments for the day too?

CLARK: Well, you had your assignments like for the month. You knew just what you were going to do. If you were a beat man, you had to have that beat for a month.

ROSSI: I mean, was there anything in particular about which they told you then?

CLARK: Oh yes, like plainclothesmen and stuff like that, they would be called in if they had something in particular to check on.

ROSSI: Of course, when you retired, they were still under the commission form of government, weren't they? They hadn't switched to Councilmen yet, or had they?

CLARK: They had switched to Councilmen.

ROSSI: Oh, had they?

CLARK: I don't know what year they switched. I think it was under Jimmy Hennessey's term for Mayor. I think they switched then.

ROSSI: Of course, then you had no commissioner, as such, to really fight for you either.

CLARK: No, the only one you had then was the Mayor.

ROSSI: The Chief or the Mayor had to do it all.

CLARK: Did all the fighting for you.

ROSSI: Jim, is there anything else that you remember, I mean during your time as a policeman. We will go on from there as to what you did after that. When did you retire now from the police department?

CLARK: The last day of November, 1948.

ROSSI: And we spoke before about the salary at that time, being about \$3600 a year for the Captain.

CLARK: Yes, \$300 a month. I was pensioned off at \$150 after twenty-four and a half years. \$150 a month was my pension.

ROSSI: With how many years service?

CLARK: Twenty-four and a half.

ROSSI: Did you retire at that time for a reason?

CLARK: Yes, I took the job over the State Attorney's Office; Chief Investigator for the State Attorney.

ROSSI: I see, who was the State Attorney at that time?

CLARK: Pierce had come in. He took Jimmy Burke's place.

ROSSI: How many men did they have over there as assistants and that? Were there quite a few?

CLARK: There were only four assistants, I think, and one of them didn't do anything. He took more real estate taxes and stuff, you know, where selling....

ROSSI: I see, he didn't do any criminal work. And what was your job, as such, with the State Attorney's Office? Did you work with the local police departments, or what?

CLARK: Well, I worked more with the Sheriff's force, and I had a policeman with me, Bernie McGann, from the police department. He took care of everything at the police department.

ROSSI: He was assigned to the State Attorney's Office?

CLARK: Yes, he was assigned to the State Attorney's Office.

ROSSI: But was he still a Joliet policeman at the time?

CLARK: Yes. What I did, in those days, we had Justice of the Peace Court. Didn't have this new rigamarole like they got now. And my job was, every morning I got my reports from the Sheriff, what happened over night, what guys were going to JP court in the morning, which mostly would be drunks and stuff like that. If it was something more of a criminal case, you just went over and presented a little evidence to the JP and he could continue the case on for ten days or whatever, whenever they wanted to bring it up again. That was my job. Go to JP court every morning. Recommend. I had nothing to say in there. All I could do

was recommend certain fines, or qualifications, or continuing the case.

ROSSI: And nine chances out of ten the judge would go along with your recommendation?

CLARK: Yes, as a rule, they would go along with me.

ROSSI: And all the judges, at that time, were elected?

CLARK: Yes, they were all JP's. They were elected then.

ROSSI: Who was the JP during your stay at the State Attorney's Office?

CLARK: Tony McKay. Anthony McKay. He got the main, he did all the Sheriff's work, practically all the Sheriff's work.

ROSSI: Then was that the time when Marty Jackson heard the cases for the city?

CLARK: No, Tom Sprague was the judge over at the Police Magistrate, then later on Marty Jackson. We had about three different JP's. The other ones didn't get much of the Sheriff's work. Hardly any of them at all. Tony McKay got practically all of that.

ROSSI: Then, did you have to follow the cases if they were going to court? If there were felonies or transfers to Circuit court, did you have to work on those too, or was your job mostly with JP court?

CLARK: Well, just the JP court. I very seldom went into the Circuit court or anything, less to just sit up there because I didn't know anything about, you know, court law at all.

ROSSI: Did you have to do any of the investigating, as such, for the State Attorney's Office?

CLARK: Yes, we went out a lot.

ROSSI: Did you?

CLARK: Of course we would be working with the Sheriff more. In those days Pierce was a great guy on gambling—to chase it out of the county. Well, in this county, here, nobody could chase it out. I did go out and saw a few slot machines they used to bring in once in a while.

ROSSI: You couldn't really knock it out altogether?

CLARK: Oh never. One man could never do it. You had to have a crew to do that. Once in a while you would go out and find a gambling joint someplace and knock it off. Some of the colored places down on Patterson Road, like that. Investigating. Oh, we had a couple of different murders, I don't remember the names now. A little girl up around in back of Silver Cross Hospital there had killed a little boy. I don't recall the names. It went on for weeks, and nobody could find out who killed this boy at all, until there was a reporter who worked for the Herald-News. I think he was out of Kokena. Do you know what reporter out

there I am talking about?

ROSSI: The one that had a radio station? Real short with a mustache?

CLARK: Yes, I can't think of his name now.

ROSSI: I can't think of it. Was it Glen Logan?

CLARK: Glen Logan. He was after the Sheriff's crew to pick up this little girl. She was the last one seen. He said, I think she is the one that killed this kid." And the Sheriff and his men wouldn't pick her up. So, finally, I don't know how it happened, but they picked her up and brought her into the Sheriff's Office one night. And he called me down, it was after hours, but he called me down and the little girl confessed to it. And we had another one out there. There was a lad in Crete, a kid by the name of Schultz, who had kidnapped one of his school companions. These were kids sixteen, seventeen years old. But this one kid came up missing and the Sheriff looked and looked. I even went out there one day, Bernie McGann and I. But I didn't have any car, and Bernie didn't have a car; we couldn't get around. I did get in with Roy Doerfler and ride around for a while, looking, trying to find out something. So finally the body of this kid was found. Right outside the yard of his companion. And the Sheriff was called out there and they investigated that night. The Sheriff got me, and I don't know who else. A couple days

later I got out there again checking where anybody could hide a body out in some of the wilderness country, out in there. I never saw the place where the kid was found, where the body was found, I never saw that place. They told me about it and I asked them, I said, "Is there any place in the back yard where they could keep a body out there." And Roy said, "No." The Sheriff said, "No, no place." The only thing is the garage and there is just room for one car in the garage. So after I had been out there Pierce asked me, "What are you doing on that case?" and I said, "I have never seen the place where the body was found or where his companion lived." And I said, "I think that kid knows something about the murder." And I said, "I talked to Roy about it and the Sheriff too, and they don't feel like they should pick him up and bring him in." He got on the telephone and he called the Sheriff. Of course they were right down below us. And he told Overby, he said, "Pick that kid up and bring him in today." So I guess this was in the morning, and at 2 o'clock in the afternoon they hadn't even picked the kid up yet to bring him in. Well, while we were sitting around there waiting for them to bring the kid in, the Sheriff got a call from the coroner, Blood, and he said he was out at some undertakers, I don't know what the guy's name was now, he said, "We got a tip out here about some place where they could keep a body in, from some old guy hanging around there all the time." And he said, "The Sheriff is going to send Roy Doerffler out." Roy didn't go out to pick up this

other kid. They left that to the deputy out there. So, he said to Roy, "You go out and see what they got out there." "Oh," they said, "You are not going to send him out there alone, are you? If he's going out to investigate where some old guys hang around, we think maybe they might have just killed this kid." And he said, "I ain't got nobody else." Well, I said, "Jesus, I can go with him, I ain't doing nothing." So, I went out with Roy. While we were there we get a call from the Sheriff's office. They had picked this one kid up and had brought him in. Schultz, his name was Schultz. They brought him in and he confessed on the way in that he killed this kid. So, the Sheriff related this to Doerffler, so Doerffler said, "Get a hold of the coroner about it." He was kind of scared about telling me. He felt kind of fishy about it so he said, "Tell the coroner." And the coroner said, "Well, let's go over there where this kid was found, where this kid that they had, was picked up." So we were on the way over there, Roy told me, he said, "Jim, I think I made a big mistake. We didn't search that place over there good enough." Well, we got over there and the kid had a shack club house right out in back of his house where you couldn't miss it, a blind man could see it. And, so he told me the story then, this kid had taken the kid that was found dead, he had him locked in there for three or four days. There was a lock on the door and Roy said, "Well gees, we can't take the lock off. We can't break into the place." And I said, "The hell we can't." So I knocked the lock off the door and he got two

bunks in there. He got ropes in there where he had this kid tied to the bunk all the time.

ROSSI: So that cleared that one up.

CLARK: So at the end, I don't know how many years he got in the penitentiary, until death I guess. But he was a smart man. He was.....I guess the reporters in court, he made monkeys out of them with his smart remarks and stuff like that. But that was a case that should have been solved right away. If I had got out there that's the first thing you look for. But they was out there at night, you see, it was dark when they went out there and they never went back in the daytime to look around the place.

ROSSI: To take another look. Now, how long were you at the State Attorney's office, Jim?

CLARK: Four years.

ROSSI: Well, you quit there in what year?

CLARK: '52. Yes, I left there in '52. I haven't done much outside of I worked for the Johnston Cookie Company. I worked out of Milwaukee. They had a warehouse here at that time. Well, I drove their truck for a while then I went into the branch manager down here for a little while till they moved out of Joliet all together. So, I refused to work.

ROSSI: I don't blame you. Then you retired completely

just two years after that.

CLARK: Yes, I haven't done anything since then.

ROSSI: Well Jim, unless there is something else that you can think of, I certainly can't. I think we have covered just about everything.

CLARK: Yes, oh, there probably is little things if you could remember them. It's hard to remember them when you get up to eighty years old.

ROSSI: Right.

CLARK: Can't recall things so good.

ROSSI: I think you have done a fine job.

CLARK: I have a lot of pictures. Do you want to keep some pictures?

ROSSI: Yes, I'd like to. Let's leave it on while we're talking about them.

CLARK: The first colored man on the force and I couldn't think of his name outside of Meyers.

ROSSI: Was he appointed when you were working?

CLARK: Who was that?

ROSSI: The colored fellow? The black man?

CLARK: Yes, they had one on, I think, when I went on. They

had a couple, they didn't last very long. But he did pick up the colored fellow that shot Sergeant Weiss. He picked him up. Probably he knew him, I don't know. Oh, it's quite an experience putting in twenty-four years. With the State Attorney's office, twenty-nine years of police work.

ROSSI: Probably, if you had a chance to do it all over again, you would probably go through it again.

CLARK: Well, not under the conditions they've got today, no. (Laughter) When we wanted to check guys, we checked now. We found men that wandered the street two, three, four o'clock in the morning. We stopped them, checked them over to see who they were and nobody was offended by it then. Sure, if you were a halfway decent citizen you were happy to see a policeman talking to you. But today, you can't talk to anybody.

ROSSI: Different situation altogether.

CLARK: Yes, different altogether.

ROSSI: Things are a little harder today, that's no lie.

CLARK: You didn't have people demanding warrants every-time you turned around or something. They took it for granted that you were a policeman and doing your work. That is all changed. The only thing I can blame for it is the United States Supreme Court.

ROSSI: Yes, that's true. The supreme Court ruling, I

think they're starting to change a little bit. I think they are starting to realize they made a few mistakes.

CLARK: Yes, that's true.

ROSSI: I think we will see some changes in the next few years.

CLARK: You know, if your a citizen and you've done nothing wrong, and you're walking down the street at two o'clock in the morning, what is wrong with being stopped by a policeman and being asked who you are, or show a little identification you've got. You didn't shake him, you might pat somebody because he didn't look right to you, you might pat him there. You never went through his pockets or anything like that. Search him.

ROSSI: No one who doesn't have anything to hide shouldn't be offended by it.

CLARK: Even way back after the strike, I think it was back in 1919 or 1920, at the Illinois Steel Company here, there was a lot of Mexicans, you know, shipped in here. Well, after I went on the force, Whiskey Row was still full of Mexicans and we used to stop them and shake them down. In them days we did find a lot of guns. We found a lot of knives in those days. Pretty near everybody. I know when I was driving, we had an officer when they arrested a Mexican, arrested for being drunk, and another drunk came along, a white man, and started bothering the officer, so the

officer had to kind of protect himself from the white guy. He bounced him across the head with a club and he killed him. And we didn't know the guy was hurt that bad. Just a drunk, we just boosted him into the wagon, the Mexican too, and my partner was Tom Qwarta, one of the best officers I ever worked with for being on the alert and watching. On the way down in the wagon, this Mexican had a big knife shoved in his sock, down under his pants leg, and he watched that man. I believe he had that knife before we go down to the station. Found that knife and took it away from him. But the other fellow, we took him out of the wagon when we got down to the station. The Captain looked at him and he said, "Gee, what happened to you?" The officer had to hit him up there, he was interfering when he was making an arrest. Then he said, "Take him up to the hospital." We took him to the hospital, poor fellow died there. He had a skull fracture. It was just one of them things. The officer didn't mean to hit him that hard, he must of caught him just in the right place. I had an old sap that we used to have in the old days, you don't carry them things like they have now. Mine was made by an old harness maker. Back in 1924, I forgot....

ROSSI: Local harness maker?

CLARK: Agnich. He used to be in where the Sheridan Restaurant is there, right where the old police station was. Right across the alley. Used to be a restaurant, used to be a hardware store in there, I can't think of the name,

but this old fella had a harness shop in the back end, and he used to make these saps about that long, just two pieces of leather and filled with shot. And they were padded so you couldn't hurt a fellow. You could knock him out, but you couldn't hurt him. You couldn't give him a skull fracture or anything. I knew it was one of the best saps ever made. I forgot, I was going to ask my daughter-in-law if she had that. I gave it to my son after I left the police. Had it hanging down here in the basement. One day he wanted it, so I gave it to him. I am going to ask her if she has got that yet, when I go down there. I'll ask her if I think about asking, see if I can't get it.

ROSSI: You mentioned your daughter. What have you, two children?

CLARK: I did have, the son died.

ROSSI: I see.

CLARK: He was a mail carrier.

ROSSI: Here in Joliet?

CLARK: He died in 1968.

ROSSI: And you have a daughter now that is married?

CLARK: Yes. She is over at Homewood, Illinois.

ROSSI: What is her married name?

CLARK: Bidgood. Marguerite Bidgood.

ROSSI: Bidgood.

CLARK: She works in the bank over there. He works for Commonwealth Edison.

ROSSI: Can you think of anything we missed that could be mentioned?

CLARK: I didn't mention traffic duty. In 1924 we had to do traffic from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. then an hour off for supper. You came back at 7 p.m. and stayed till traffic let up. You had an iron hand signal you rolled into the center of the intersection and just kept turning it to stop and go. A tough job on a hot day. Later on traffic lights came in. Then in the thirtys we had the horse patrol in the loop. Overby rode the horse and everyone thought a lot of him. Later, Cannie Stofan rode the horse for a time. He was just used for patrolling the loop.

ROSSI: Well Jim, I think that should conclude it.

CLARK: I don't know if there is anything there that will do you any good.

ROSSI: We will have it typed up. I am sure it will.

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